

Hearing from our Health Mentors: Impact of a Longitudinal Interprofessional Education Program

Ashley Baronner, BS, MSII

Faculty Advisor: Lauren Collins, MD

Elena Umland, PharmD, Carolyn Giordano, PhD, Edwin Lim, BS, PharmD Candidate



Introduction

- Mixed-methods study to evaluate the perspectives of the Health Mentors in the **Jefferson Health Mentors Program (JHMP)** relative to impact of program
- Correlate these responses to the **Interprofessional Education Collaborative's (IPEC) Competencies**
 - *Values/Ethics*
 - *Roles/Responsibilities*
 - *Interprofessional Communication*
 - *Team and Teamwork*

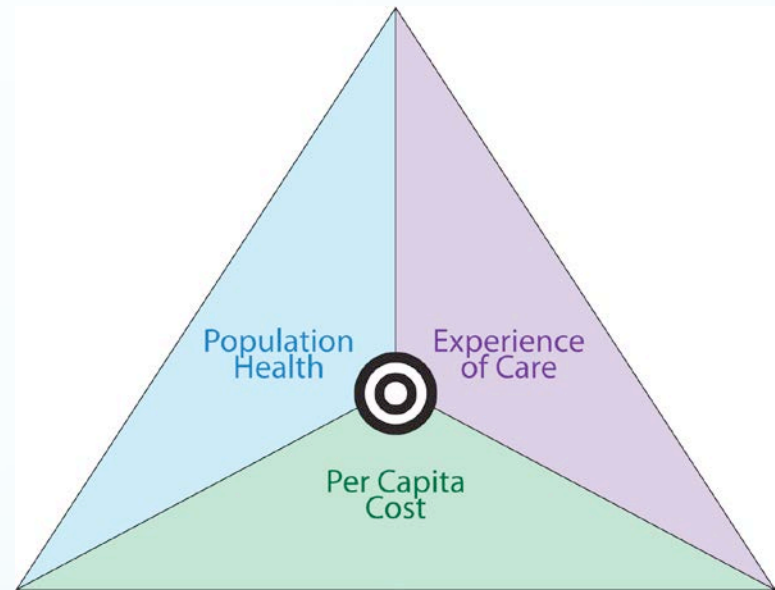
Background: JHMP



- JHMP is a two-year interprofessional education (IPE) curriculum
- Students from six healthcare professions participate
- Health Mentor (HM) is an adult of any age who lives with one or more chronic conditions or impairments
- Goal is to utilize IPE interventions to promote high quality, patient-centered, team-based care of chronic conditions

Background: Big Picture

- One half of adults in the United States suffer from one or more chronic health conditions (Ward et al. 2012)
- Early exposure to people living with chronic disease and to other health professions' roles/expertise may ultimately lead to achievement of the Triple Aim





Background: Literature Review

- Senior mentor programs are designed to promote geriatric education and patient-centered care (Eleazer, Wieland, Roberts, Richeson & Thornhill, 2006)
- Limited literature (Towle et al. 2010)
 - Program effect on students
 - Patient outcomes
- Patients report raised self-esteem and empowerment (Wykurz and Kelly, 2002)
- Senior mentors enjoy the companionship with students (Towle et al. 2010)
- Pilot study findings: may promote skills such as attentive listening, empathy, and a holistic approach to care

Methods: Quantitative

- HMs who completed the JHMP in Spring 2014 were mailed a short survey
- HMs were asked to evaluate student teams according to IPEC core competencies, to rate their own health status and to describe any change in health outcomes by participating in program
- Program impact was evaluated using a 4-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 4=strongly agree)
 - Questions grouped by IPE core competency

Methods: Qualitative

- HMs were asked to identify examples of impact of the program on:
 - Overall health
 - Health behaviors
 - Knowledge of wellness or self-care; home and medication safety; and health and wellness goals
- HMs were also asked to list 2-3 ways the program could be a better experience in the future
- 10 HMs participated in a focus group
- A thematic analysis and frequency count of open-ended responses were completed

Results: Demographic Information

- **Response rate:** 93/120 (77.5%)
- **Average (+/- SD) age:** 66.9+/-14.4
- **Gender:** 62% female, 38% male
- **Ethnicity**
 - 64.1% White/Caucasian
 - 28.3% Black/ African-American
 - 5.4% as Asian/Pacific Islander,
 - 1.1% Hispanic
- **Average number of years a HM participated in the program:**
3.39+/-1.4

Results: Quantitative

- HMs rated the student teams positively relative to all of the IPEC competencies' four domains
 - Average (+/- SD) responses
 - Values/ethics: 3.93+/-0.36,
 - Roles on the healthcare team: 3.82+/-0.42
 - Communication: 3.69+/-0.44
 - Teamwork: 3.80+/-0.50
- Mentors rated their satisfaction with the JHMP **9.13+/-1.43** (10=Highest, 1=lowest)



Results: Qualitative

- HMs reported learning useful information pertaining to:
 - Home safety
 - Self care
 - Medication usage and safety
 - Nutrition
 - Exercise
 - Sleep patterns
 - Goal setting
- 62/93 open-ended responses pertaining to personal health status
 - 50% positive, 27% negative, and 23% neutral
- 54/93 open-ended responses regarding health behaviors or ability to manage health changed as a result of volunteering in this program
 - 93% positive, 7% neutral

Results: Major Themes

- Improved health status
 - *“I’ve been more active on a regular basis”*
 - *“I am willing to listen and take charge of my health”*
 - *“I feel more accountability to follow through with my health goals”*
- Learned health behaviors
 - *“I take my medications daily and exercise most days”*
 - *“Taking medications better, keeping up with doctors, and eating healthier”*
 - *“More alert to my needs as a senior”*
- Wellness and self-care
 - *“I’ve always understood the importance of wellness and caring for myself, but each student offered suggestions pertaining to their field of study”*
 - *“Suggested drinking more water and doing more exercise”*
 - *“Simply paying more attention to yourself”*

Results: Major Themes

- Home safety knowledge
 - *“Securing rugs and installing grab bars in bathrooms among other examples”*
 - *“The team pointed out my loose area rugs, and that I held on to the handle of the door of my refrigerator when I climbed up a small ladder. Very unsafe!”*
 - *“Recommended a carbon dioxide detector”*
- Medication safety knowledge
 - *“Organized medication and set schedule of when to take it”*
 - *“Where to store medications”*
 - *“Something I knew, but making sure to use a monthly sorter helped on days I could not remember if I took my AM pills”*

Results: Major Themes

- Health and wellness goals
 - *“The students helped me set attainable goals for exercising, now I need to implement!”*
 - *“Goal set loose weight- lost 10 lbs February 2014, April goal met”*
 - *“The discussion reinforcing contacts and my health care providers and improving personal support”*
 - *“Journal keeping gives you a better pattern to eating and taking medications”*

Results: Major Themes

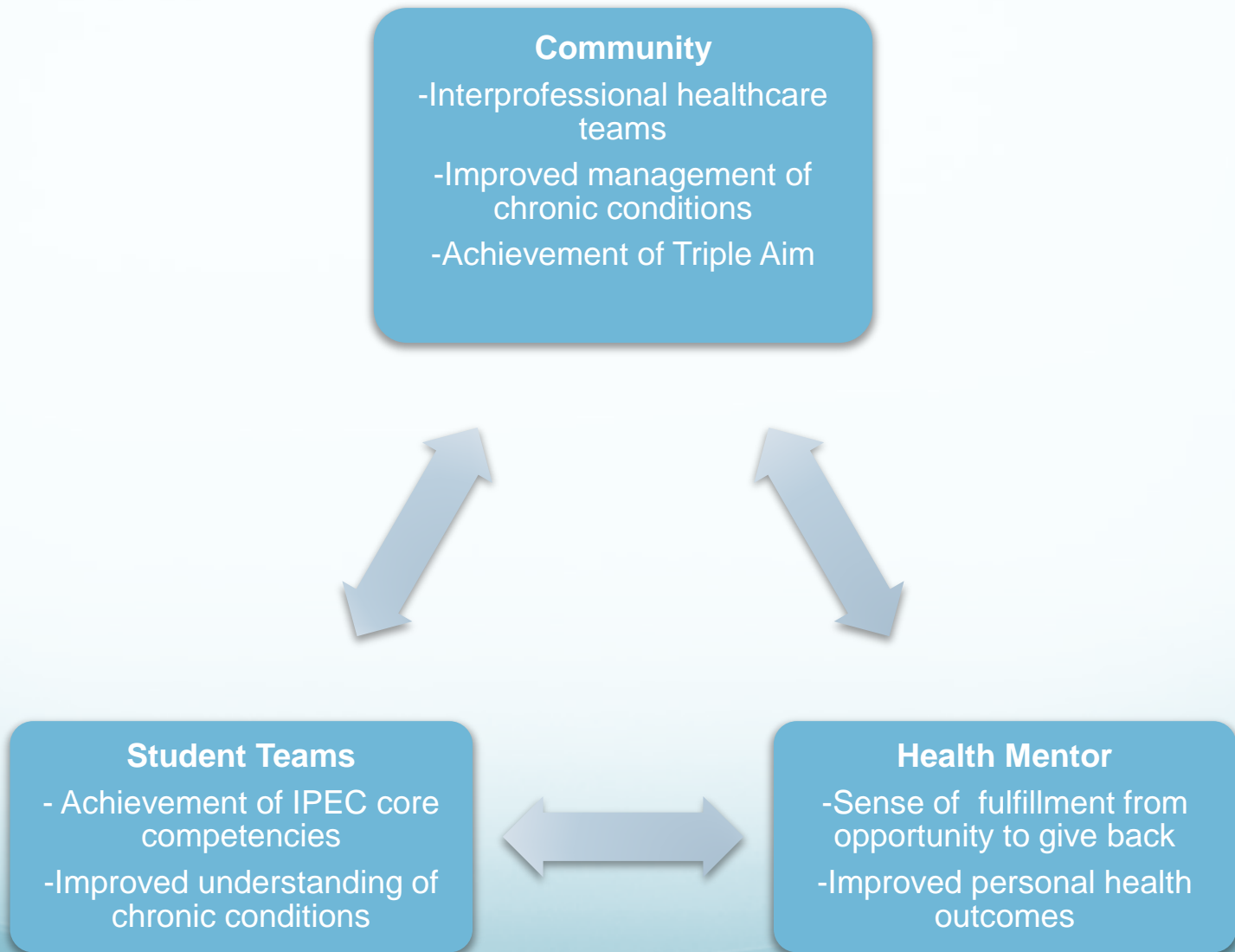
- Program Impact

- *“I found compassion, which encouraged me to continue fighting for my health”*
- *“I think it’s a great program. I believe the students that I worked with have a better understanding of chronic illness in such that it affects everyone differently.”*
- *“Perfect experience for me as a patient with advanced cancer. Students were considerate and open to my sharing how I felt about end of life decisions, including how health care professionals can enhance the quality of life of someone like myself. Enjoyed the experience.”*

- Recommendations

- HMs suggested that the program incorporate additional visits and facilitate ongoing communication

Results: Focus Group





Results: Focus Group

- *“I lost 12 lbs, I never walked before program, started with 5 minutes, I am also off certain BP meds.”*
- *“I taught my students that we have feelings and deserve to be treated as a person not just medical condition.”*
- *“The students questioned my partner about what it was like to live with someone with chronic illness, and they demonstrated interest in my caregiver. I felt that this really showed empathy and insight.”*

Discussion

- Mentors rate their student teams highly in all competency domains and express positive personal outcomes by participating in the JHMP
- Health Mentors strongly value their role in shaping future medical professionals
 - Mentors felt empowered by the experience
 - Mentors enjoyed the companionship of their student teams
- A team approach to chronic illness management may lead to a more positive mindset and better health outcomes in patients

Discussion

- Student teams who participate in a longitudinal IPE curriculum can have a positive impact on their Health Mentor partners
 - Mentors felt that the students successfully achieved the IPE core competencies
- The skills developed may promote empathetic, team-based, and patient-centered chronic illness care
- IPE curricular innovations like this one may help to teach students effective strategies for achieving the Triple Aim

Discussion Questions

- Do the *perceived* positive personal outcomes of the Health Mentors correlate with improved health outcomes?
 - If so, is this only a short term finding or long term impact?
- Does the JHMP improve the health outcomes of not only the health mentors, but also the future patients of students who have participated in the program?

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THANK YOU!

